

# THE FORMATION OF CCV-TV IN THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION IN SOUTH AFRICA

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

CCV-TV was launched on the first of January 1992. CCV is an abbreviation of Contemporary Community Values. The Head of CCV, Mr. Madala Mphahlele, says that this new station is aiming to cater for the "thinking, aware new South African" (*Marketing Mix brochure*, Jan./Feb.1992). CCV-TV is a commercial channel running entirely on advertising revenue. It is the first multi-lingual station without any particular pre-determined market based on neither race, language group nor cultural disparities as the other SABC-TV channels have been. Mr. Mphahlele has a vision of South Africa becoming a united nation and sees CCV-TV as being a catalyst in that respect (*Sunday Times Magazine*, Special Report, 29 December 1992).

## 2. BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES TO BE INVESTIGATED

The essay will critically analyse the meaning and implications of the title, Contemporary Community Values, and to establish its significance in this juncture of the South African history. There are two classes of broadcasting services that commonly operate in the world; public service broadcasting and commercial broadcasting. South African Television has commonly been regarded as a public broadcaster, but over the years has shown hybrid status with its television programming tending to be of a commercial type and its funding dominated by advertising revenue rather than by public-based license fees (Task Group Report, 1991).

The essay will thus examine the philosophy of CCV-TV by assessing the model of communication on which the channel is based, the implications of this choice and the observable consequences of the model. Throughout the world, television has become a vital feature of common life, from highly industrialised countries to newly developing nations (Silke: 1989). In South Africa, since its introduction in 1976, television has established itself as a conveyor of education, entertainment and information. Television in South Africa, as in the rest of the modern world, is increasingly becoming an integral part of social values and culture as well of political institutions and systems (Silke: 1989).

To ascertain the data for the essay, the programming (particularly soap operas, dramas, game shows and comedies), and languages of broadcasting will be the main focus. CCV claims to have taken a quantum leap in comparison to the traditional mould of SABC's broadcasts (*Sunday-Times Magazine*, 29 December 1991). The aims of CCV-TV are to offer and serve the South African public in such a way that the ideals of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexiest society are pursued and advanced (Mphahlele: Interview, 1992). The essay will be composed of empirical observations to depict whether these aims are in fact pursued and achieved, but most importantly how the channel attempts to achieve them.

## 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The methodology which forms the basis of this essay is empirical observations of the channel. The major categories of interest are the types of programming, the communication model adopted to guide the programming and the languages of transmission. The conceptual tools for this analysis will be:

1. The theories or models of communication associated with Siebert, De Fleur, Tunstall such as the Authoritarian model, the Free Market model and the Social Responsibility model.
2. The work on cultural imperialism advanced by Mattelart, Siegelau, Tunstall and others.
3. The work of Antonio Gramsci which offers insights into issues of hegemony, the state and ideology.

Each of these conceptual tools offers ways of analysing CCV-TV in relation to the broader socio-political and economic structures of society. The consequent dynamics of the politics of South Africa are therefore of importance in analysing CCV-TV and the forces that brought about its formation in the transitional period of the South African context.

### **3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING**

Broadcasting is a vital communication medium in most countries. The broadcasting institutions of a particular country often mirror the political system of that country thus often resulting in the broadcasting system being categorised according to the government policy and ideology (Silke, 1989). In South Africa, broadcasting occupies a peculiarly dominant and contentious position. Television and radio are prime sources of information and education in this country as a large portion of the population are illiterate, and it is therefore not surprising that it is included on the governments reform agenda. The present broadcasting system is overwhelmingly dominated by the state broadcaster, SABC, even though there are independent like BOP-TV.

The participant parties in the negotiations towards a democratic South Africa agree that a decentralisation of power accompanied by the democratisation of broadcasting institutions is desirable, but there is no consensus on how this is to be achieved (Collins, in *Broadcast*, Nov.8, 1991: 19). The ruling National Party is privatising monolithic state institutions and, according to the left, in order to ensure against possible loss of office after the first one person one vote election and so that even the post-apartheid government will not use the broadcasting machinery for its own purposes in the way the National Party has (Collins, in *Broadcast*, Nov.8, 1991).

The SABC has undertaken major internal reorganisations including the appointment of blacks to leadership positions and the creation of separate business divisions such as Television, Radio, Transmission, Broadcasting Centre and Group Functions. SATV's Quentin Green has openly spoken about privatising both TV1 and CCV (*The Weekly Mail*, January 3-9, 1992: 20). With three television channels and about 23 radio stations the SABC commands a daily audience of 14 million listeners and 7 million viewers. The broadcasting system in South Africa has changed and continues to change since the monopoly of the SABC was broken by allowing new participants to broadcast, namely M-NET and BOP-TV.

The apartheid policy has tended over the years to dictate the broadcasting policy. South Africa with its strong central government and the tense political situation has continually found its broadcasting media of great interest to the power holders of the country and subject to covert and overt forms of control. The increasing authoritarian nature of the National Party, particularly during the P.W.Botha era, saw the media under close governmental control (Silke, 1989). This situation deteriorated with the enforcement of the State of Emergency, with the Mass media experiencing severe restrictions and censorship. The logical outcome of this control was the utilisation of the

broadcasting media to bolster a narrow political elite and became of important propagandistic value to the ruling National Party (Worringham, 1982).

SABC-TV is nominally independent of the government and is financed by a combination of public licenses and advertising. TV 1 began in 1976 broadcasting in English and Afrikaans with its target market the white audience. TV2/3 was formed in 1982 broadcasting in Nguni and Sotho for black audiences. This entrenched the apartheid division of the South African society in the broadcasting structures themselves (Currie and Markovitz in *Fawo News*, Sept. 1991: 15). TV4 began broadcasting in 1985 as an imported entertainment channel. The establishment of TV2/3 coincided with the fundamental economic, political, social and ideological influences which were all bearing on South Africa at that particular historical juncture (Tomaselli, Tomaselli, and Muller, 1989: 154).

TV2/3 in its content is directly related to the emerging class structure which was stimulated by the beginning of structural modifications within the political economy during the early 1970's (Tomaselli et al: 1989). These included:

- 99 year leasehold property rights for urban blacks.
- The recognition of the permanence of the urban black.
- Elimination of job reservations in most employment areas.
- Improved wage packets for non-whites (Sinclair: 1987: 57).

The formation of TV2/3 was a method of incorporating the emerging black petit-bourgeoisie into the ideals espoused by capital with its emphasis on production and consumption. It was a strategy of maintaining white hegemony by consensus rather than by overt force (Gramsci, 1971). This development effectively excluded rural blacks from the economic developments.

SABC's closeness to the government has always been a point of dispute in the country. The accusations by the critics of SABC of bias in favour of the ruling party is based largely on the existing method of appointing the Board of the SABC which is done by the State President, and until this is changed, the bias is likely to remain intact (Silke, 1989). The SABC also falls under the jurisdiction of the government since it falls under the control of the Minister of Home Affairs, Gene Louw.

The close contact with the government has influenced the SABC's news and public affairs broadcasts in that prominence and access is given to the government speakers and their views emphasised over alternative views. This is still the case despite the fact that exposure is now being given to non-parliamentary organisations which were formerly banned like the ANC, PAC and SACP. As has been pointed out by *New Nation* that in the current affairs programmes the government has been 'neatly' removed from the debates about the present violence :

leading the ANIC, IFP and other -'black parties' to debate pressing problems. This has a whitewashing impact of creating the politically treacherous impression that the violence is a 'black' problem (*New Nation*, April 26-May 2, 1992: 8)

## **5. SABC IN TRANSITION**

The broadcasting culture of South Africa is changing, at a rapid and dizzying rate...If the 1980's was a decade of broadcast-propaganda, then the 1990's promises to be the decade of broadcast-competition (*Weekly Mail*, Jan.3-9,1992: 18).

As South Africa changes and moves towards the creation of a apartheid-free society, the broadcasting policy and institutions are receiving rigorous scrutiny. It is important to emphasise that the government has been forced to liberalise the media institutions due to a number of reasons. These range from the increasing influence of internal political changes as a result of the National Party's reform policy, the influence of external motivations as well as the breakdown of its monopolistic position in the country in

allowing for competition, as offered by the independent broadcasters. The SABC is presently embarking on decentralisation.

In March 1990, the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Gene Louw, appointed a task force to investigate the broadcasting sector. The task force is chaired by SABC board chairman, Professor Christo Viljoen. The objectives of the Task Group was to investigate and to make recommendations regarding the following:

- i) The entire broadcasting field, a information policy and broadcasting strategy for South Africa and Southern Africa.
- ii) Future broadcasting needs, international trends in broadcasting, the application and effect of new technology, commercialisation. and regulation.
- iii) A controlling structure for broadcasting matters such as IBA.
- iv) The evaluation of existing legislation dealing with broadcasting and/or new broadcasting legislation.

The Task Group was heavily criticised for its unrepresentative nature by various organisations and groups (*Fawo News*, Nov. 1990: 5). The DP noted that all the members of the task force were male, there was no representative from parliament, none from the advertising industry and no one representing the viewers and listeners or market research organisations. Also apart from NP members, no other political organisations are represented in the task force (*Fawo News*, Nov. 1990: 8). According to Richard Collins the Task Group's report does represent a major step forward in South African broadcasting policy, but it's actual proposals are still conservative and amount to a little more than the fine-tuning of the existing broadcasting system (*Broadcast*, Nov.8, 1991).

The decentralisation of broadcasting was first signalled in January 1991 when the Chairman of SABC, Christo Viljoen, announced " a greater degree of decentralisation, a greater emphasis on the SABC's clients and the preparation of the SABC for a more competitive broadcasting environment " (SABC press release, 23/01/91). Prof. H. C. Viljoen believes it would be irresponsible of the SABC not to keep abreast of the developments regarding privatisation and deregulation (*Fawo News*, Nov.1990: 9). This is evident in the formation of the new commercial channel, CCV. CCV is a result of the reorganisation of TV2/3/4 into a single channel that co-schedules English, Afrikaans, Nguni and Sotho language programmes with imported entertainment. This channel began transmission on the first of January 1992. CCV is the focus of this essay and how it fits into the broadcasting policy of the SABC, the political situation in South Africa and other international trends.

## **6. CONTEXT OF THE FORMATION OF CCV**

The period of South African history since State President F.W. de Klerk's speech on February 2, 1990, has changed the fundamental social and political relations in our country. An era of negotiations has been inaugurated and there is now a possibility of developing a new constitution that will represent the democratic aspirations of all the people of South Africa (*Fawo News*, Nov. 1990: 7). The government has invited the major political parties in South Africa to join the negotiations in a bid to discuss the future of South Africa. The PAC, SACP and AZAPO, however, have continually declined the invitation on the belief that they were being sidelined from the dominant 'legitimate' political process, aimed at defining and containing the pace of change (Scott, C., 1990: 4). The CP is also not in favour of joining the political forum named CODESA as it believes the basis which form the negotiations (which is discussions towards a democratic South Africa), already excludes them, since the CP is in favour of self-determination - the goal of apartheid.

The National Party has now been opened to all races, there have been privatising

initiatives and the racist apartheid legislations repealed thus giving the appearance of 'openness' and genuine reform (Scott: 1990). The crucial obstacle towards a democracy, however, has not been crossed and that is giving the vote to the black people of South Africa. Since the unbanning of the ANC and its allies and since the beginning of negotiations, the main debate in the country has been whether nationalisation or privatisation is the appropriate strategy for decentralising power in this country which has been for decades concentrated in the hands of a narrow elite. The mass media has naturally become part of this debate.

The ANC has emphasised the need for the democratisation of media which has to be underpinned by an equitable distribution of media resources, development programmes and a deliberate effort to engender open debate (*New Nation*, Jan.17-23, 1992). Democratisation is allowing maximum access to the institutions to all the people of South Africa and to open them up to be used for constructive debates not in the interest of any particular party or group (Macozona, S. in *New Nation*, Jan. 17-23, 1992: 12). CODESA has invited all interested parties to table their suggestions on the use of media in the transitional period and in the democratic South Africa. As much as all the parties involved in CODESA agree that decentralisation of power is necessary, on the free flow of information and are adamant that the media should be free of government control, it is the method of implementing these proposals that differ.

The nationalisation of many industries in South Africa over the years has enabled the government to achieve more control over the country. The steel works, railways and harbours, posts and telegraphs, had all come under the control of the government (Worringham, 1982: 4). As part of the process of reform, the government has been frenetically privatising most of the industries that were previously nationalised thus the establishment of Spoornet, Telkom, Transnet and many others. The SABC with its internal reorganisation of personnel and structures indicates the trend towards privatisation. Currie and Markovitz propose that "It is to see this subdivision of the SABC into divisions and business units as a way of making SABC easier to privatise" (*Fawo News*, Nov.1990: 17).

The advantage of privatising the major industries and institutions (including broadcasting institutions) by the government is that it is compatible with their support of free enterprise. The political elite, the economic elite and the controllers of mass media in South Africa are intertwined. M-NET is a commercial pay-TV station that began in The major newspaper groups are co-owners of M-Net who are simultaneously the major shareholders in the South African economy such as Anglo-American, Sanlam and Rembrandt. This interdependence does not allow much criticism and debate within the country. If the National Party thus continues to privatise the SABC then the media which should be the vehicles for debate and criticism which are part of a democratic process will be cretinised, if not already.

The democratic process will be cretinised in the sense that the lack of diversity in ownership of media leads to 'one voice' and the suppression of alternative views. The lack of diversity of newspapers and newspapers owners, for example, obstructs a free flow of information, debate and opinion which is essential for democracy. Especially in the current transitional period in South Africa, there is a need for a vibrant and pluralistic newspaper industry providing broad political choice to the public (*COM*, 31 Jan.-2 Feb.: 1992). The monopoly of the print media by a minority should not be encouraged to occur in the broadcast media as well, which privatisation is leading to.

Professor Viljoen, Chairman of SABC, criticised M-NET's cross-ownership in print media: "the integration of different media within a single control centre is not compatible with the extension of freedom of expression" (Markovitz in *Fawo News*, Nov. 1990: 14). Apartheid has been advantageous to the minority that has monopolised the South African economy for decades and thus the National Party even after the one person one vote election would have desirable sympathisers in their camp. The government thus supports privatisation because it is in keeping with their agenda of a free market economy and their efforts to retain the power they monopolised for so long. Thus the

privatisation of SABC will lead to the preservation of the " comfortable broadcasting douopoly, part 'owned' by the National Party and part by the press oligopolies " (*Broadcast*, Nov.8, 1991: 19).

## **7. CCV: THE CHANNEL**

### **7.1. What's in the name**

CCV stands for Contemporary Community Values. Mr. Madala Mphahlele, Head of CCV, picked these words deliberately to try and convey an attitude and a state of mind of the people the channel is targeting. "We are talking to a new South African and assume he is intelligent" (*Sowetan*, May 25, 1992: 13). The main concern in the choice of a name for the new channel was to look for words which are not historically negatively 'loaded' in the South African context such as 'culture' which was used to justify apartheid (Mphahlele: Interview, 1992).

#### **(a) Contemporary**

'Contemporary' is indicative of the immediacy of the channel and its concentration on the 'now' and not the past (Mphahlele: Interview, 1992). The word; according to the Head of CCV, is an invitation to all South Africans to 'bury' the past and to strive towards a democratic future. Mr. Mphahlele does admit that it is not easy for the SABC to break from the traditional mould tainted by the apartheid policy with its discrete categories of broadcast content in keeping with the diversity of South African cultures.

#### **(b) Community**

'Community' is directed at the whole of the South African society. CCV is on a mission to be 'The Nation's Station' (Mphahlele: Interview, 1992). Unlike TV2/3/4 with their clearly delineated target audience, CCV-TV is a multi-lingual and multi-racial channel with programmes broadcast in the seven main languages, namely, North Sotho, South Sotho, Tswana, Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans, English and on Sunday mornings Indian languages. The research conducted by CCV says that:

When CCV-TV was launched, it became the largest TV station nationally on a viewed yesterday basis with 5,8 million unduplicated adult viewers (See Appendix B2, *Marketing Mix brochure*, Jan./Feb.1992).

Although CCV says that it does not impose borders on its target audience, its programming shows a motivation to target a particular type of viewership.

The demographics of television viewership identified a target market for the service:

By definition, the greatest television penetration will be among the urban people of all shades. And our average viewing on a daily basis spans the 16-to-49-year-olds in the main (*Sowetan*, May 25, 1992: 13).

The viewers being reached, according to psychographic analysis based on the market research by CCV-TV, are 'younger, better educated and more conservant in English' (*Marketing Mix brochure*, Jan./Feb.1992). The 'yuppies', says Mr. Mphahlele. The rural areas are mainly reached by radio as they lack infrastructure, such as electricity, so that the majority of the population do not own television sets and most of them are not conservant in English.

Mr. Mphahlele attributes the dominance of the use of the English language on CCV-TV to the stations mission to break sectionalism. The differences in language are the barriers to communication and understanding between the South Africans (Mphahlele: Interview,

1992). Although people's preference of being broadcast to in their own language is recognised, the Head of CCV believes the targeted viewership which is in the closer proximity to the major metropolitan areas, uses English or Afrikaans daily, and the rural population are catered for by radio.

CCV has also decided to reduce lip-synchronised dubbing of other languages into vernacular as a result of the research conducted by the Human Science Research Council which showed that these programmes should be broadcast in the original language of broadcast as a large percentage of the viewers in the major cities understand English (*Marketing Mix brochure* Jan./Feb.1992). The advantage for CCV derived from this research is that broadcasting imported English programmes is more profitable than making them locally and Mr. Mphahlele's main priority is to ensure that CCV is more profitable and attracts sufficient advertising revenue.

### **(c) Values**

According to the Longman Dictionary Contemporary English (New Edition), 'values' are standards or principles, ideas about the worth or importance of certain qualities, especially those generally accepted by a particular group.

We need to ask what contemporary community values are being projected? Where are the community values that portray the lives of South Africans today and the crucial issues affecting them? said the ANC (*The Natal Witness*, 14 Jan.1992: 1).

At this time, since it's still a new channel, the values may not be conspicuous, says Mr. Mphahlele, but there are continuities like the old dichotomy of the good triumphing over the evil and so on. In music, education, news and sport there are also common values with which all South Africans can identify. In the midst of the diversities and differences that were so vigorously encouraged by the apartheid system, there are common values that are part of human nature that can be derived from the programming shown on the channel.

## **7.2. CHARACTERISTICS**

### **(a) 'Mixed' Model**

CCV is a commercial channel in which profit is the bottom line. However, from observing the programming, it is evident that commercial viability is not the sole criteria for the type of programmes shown on the channel. CCV does seem, to a certain extent, to be sensitive to the communal needs of South Africa. This is evident in its large proportion of educational programmes which are not usually categorised as commercially viable material. Thus this essay will attempt to classify CCV-TV as displaying principles of a 'mixed' model. From the types of programming broadcasted by the channel, the haphazard mix of the Libertarian and social responsibility characteristics can be discerned.

Under the libertarian concept, the functions of the mass media are to inform and to entertain. Basically, the underlying purpose of the media was to help discover truth, to assist in the process of solving social and political problems by presenting evidence and opinion as the basis for decisions (Siebert: 1956). " Informed listeners make for informed decisions " (Mphahlele: Interview, 1992). The essential characteristic of this process is the supposed freedom from governmental control and domination. The libertarian model assumed that the mass media would operate in a capitalistic society in which free enterprise was a guiding principle. This meant that the instruments of

communication would be privately owned and would compete in an open market, but this necessitates the availability of capital and the ability to produce profit.

Applied in the South African context, this principle clearly advantages a minority over the disadvantaged majority of the population. This will mean that the elites that have controlled this country in the economic and political sphere through four decades will be left in their positions of power. The market forces under the libertarian principles produce results in terms of oligopoly control and depoliticization of content in media (Garnham: 1990). The libertarian model implies that lack of government control means no control. This is false since the advertisers who fund the mass media under this principle control its content which is still control. The content of commercial stations which are based on the libertarian principles is restricted to economically viable material such as light entertainment, soap operas, dramas and sport. In most modern societies, the interests of the capitalists and the governments overlap, thus the mass media apply self-censorship to protect their mutual interests (Curran, 1978).

### **(b) Advertising**

In South Africa, television has been funded by both advertising and license fees. The problem with the license system is that evasion occurs. Thus television funded by license fee tends to be short of money, especially compared with that funded by advertising. CCV is unique in that from its outset it has been funded by advertising. The most distinctive feature of the difference between CCV-TV and TV2/3/4 is the increase in integrated advertising. " CCV is selling a multi-racial market audience to essentially white advertisers " (Mphahlele: Interview, 1992). CCV has since its inception on the first of January 1992 been involved in an intensive advertising campaign to introduce and attract both the audiences and advertisers (See Appendix E). The campaign has been necessary in order to inform the audiences and advertisers that there is a new 'product' on the market as is done with other commercial products (Mphahlele: Interview, 1992).

The CCV principle of non-racialism has provided it with the appropriate conditions for deracialized advertising. The advertisers are acknowledging the development of a common consumer culture as blacks become urbanised and educated their 'tastes' become more westernised (Sinclair: 1987). The integrated programming also saves the advertisers the expense of duplication as was the case with the multiple channel TV2/3/4. The integrated programming is attractive to the advertisers who are looking for an expanding market.

### **(c) Programming**

Mr. Mphahlele purposefully encourages the new channel to be a unifying factor in the country and encourages positive uses of the media in national development. This is evident in the CCV's television commercial " Join Our World ". The advertisement shows individuals and groups that compose the society of South Africa hurling insults and abuse at each other. The advert demonstrates the tension and anger within the country and offers CCV as an alternative, with its tranquil and understanding philosophy in opposition to that apartheid era. CCV is clearly taking a path away from the old divisional ideologies of TV2/3/4 and is taking a position of being for the new South Africa (Kungoane, M.: Interview, 1992). This philosophy of CCV has also been extensively propagated in the print media as well (See Appendix E).

According to the publicity officer of CCV-TV, Meshack Kungoane, the channel attempts with its mix of programmes, to appeal to a large cross-section of the population at times suitable to them during the course of the day. CCV caters for the children and youth early in the day with both entertainment and educational programmes, followed by the soap operas, then from 18h00 to 20h00, the vernacular programmes targeted at the

Black population and finally for the rest of the evening, the more general entertainment such as movies, mini series and dramas (Kungoane: Interview, 1992).

The AMPS figures for CCV in 1992 show that the largest viewing audience is between 19h00 - 21h00 (See Appendix B1). This audience is mainly composed of the black population. The number of people watching increases from 1 576 which is about 6.9% to 2924 (12.8%.) at 19h00 (during the news) and decreases again to 1 837 (8.0%) after 21h00 when the more general entertainment is broadcast. The programmes between 19h00 and 21h00 are the main news bulletin at 19h00 in Zulu or Sotho with subtitles in English, followed by the indepth Programme called 'News Line' at 19h30. Thereafter it is the programmes in vernacular languages.

## 1. Dramas, Game Shows and Comedies

The most common genres in vernacular languages on CCV are the game shows, magazine programmes and comedies. Dramas are few and the episodes are usually repeated over and over again, for example, *Inkom'Edla Yodwa*. The dramas are usually monopolised by same personalities who have become household names in the South African entertainment industry such as Alfred Nokwe and Henry Cele. At the beginning of the 1992, there were approximately seven local productions in vernacular languages being transmitted per week, mainly game shows, with other days being monopolised by imported material.

In the amended schedule from the first of October 1992, CCV hopes to increase the amount of vernacular programmes and dramas although they still insist that presently there no capital available to produce the desirable amount of local programmes (Mphahlele: 1992). Even after the revamping of the channel on the first of October 1992, local content on the screen is still approximately 25-30%, including the educational programmes. The entertainment programming in vernacular languages is still restricted to game shows such as *Imalini* and *Ngomgqibelo/Kamokibelo*. *Velaphi* and *Going Up* are presently the local comedies being broadcast on CCV. *Velaphi* is a Xhosa production and *Going UP* is composed of a multi-racial cast with the four major South African languages - Sotho, English, Afrikaans and Zulu - being spoken.

The language problem of South Africa is very conspicuous on CCV as it attempts to accommodate everybody. The compartmentalisation of language groups into certain regions is becoming more and more imposed than a reality. Divisions into language groups is becoming blurred and vague. Sothos are not just restricted to the Transvaal or Zulus to Natal. The division of CCV, particularly at the beginning of the year, into CCV-Nguni and CCV-Sotho, is not any different from the divisions of TV2/3, with TV3 only available, in so-called Sotho-speaking regions (See Appendix C). These blatant divisions on CCV have become less marked with the Natal also receiving Sotho transmissions and the channel is now called CCV-TV.

The problem of language differences, however, still remains unsolved despite CCV's attempt to minimise regionalisation. The fact that people prefer to be broadcast to in their own languages, even if they know more than one vernacular language, poses a problem and much disgruntlement amongst the viewers. There are dramas broadcast in Sotho that the non-Sotho speakers would like to watch and understand, but because they cannot speak the language cannot and vice-versa. The possibilities of lip-synchronised dubbing or simulcasts can therefore be investigated as a means to alleviate this barrier. This will also give the illusion of an increase in the number of vernacular dramas as both language groups will have greater choice than was previously available.

The South African Broadcasting board has laid down requirements for the local content of programmes on South African Television (*Task Group Report, 1991*). For the TV1 service they suggested 50% with at least 45% minimum during peak time for each of the two official languages in the short-term, with 50% average in the long-term, including off-peak time. A minimum of 35% is proposed for TV2, each for Zulu and Xhosa, and 23% has been stipulated for TV3, each for Setswana, Sepedi and Sesotho. However, the SABC still has no formal quota system which binds television stations, especially commercial ones, in terms of the local content.

As it is cheaper to buy products than to produce them at home therefore the large proportion of the importation of foreign cultural products, there is a necessity for the government to intervene. The government should create a fund to subsidise culturally valuable television in order to support regional, minority and national culture that suffers in the imperfections of the competitive markets. Countries such as Canada, India and Australia use the quota system. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal gives Australia one of the most encompassing forms of television content regulation in the world (*Media Information Australia, NO.62, Nov.1991: 26*).

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal stresses the cultural rather than the economic reasons for regulating Australian content. It acknowledges the lower cost of imported programmes and the need to maintain the domestic production industries have been the important factors in the development of such regulations. It is important that regulations of local content not only serve to increase the amount of South African productions, but also safeguard the quality and variety of programming (such as social documentaries, arts, science, current affairs, drama and children's drama). The notion of 'South African cultural identity' should also acknowledge that we live in a multi-cultural, multi-racial society, where there are real inequalities based on race, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, which are reflected in culture and representations. The term itself, 'cultural identity', is a site of struggle in South Africa, as in any other multi-cultural society.

## **2. Educational programmes**

Mr. Mphahlele has responded to the country's educational crisis and has set a large percentage of airtime for educational broadcasts. This has given rise to the 'mixed' characteristic of CCV as a combination of the libertarian and social responsibility models. The Social Responsibility system involves stronger requirements on the producer to provide information, education and cultural products to satisfy the 'minority' tastes which might not be commercially viable. This is evident on CCV in its religious programmes; 'Impressions' Which is an Indian-oriented programme on Sunday mornings and the educational programmes which are shown from eleven in the morning to four in the afternoon on weekdays, and from nine to two in the afternoon on Saturdays.

The large proportion of educational programmes have been aimed to be complementary to the school syllabuses in South Africa in that they are geared to improving educational performance during the year and to facilitate in adequately preparing the students for the final year examinations. CCV educational programmes such as Teleschool have been designed to be more visual and exciting for the school-going audience. The subjects broadcast from science, history, literature, art and biology. Repeat programmes of weekday lessons are usually transmitted on Saturday mornings for the benefit of those who missed them. The majority of the material transmitted on these programmes is locally produced thus directly relevant to the South African context and curriculum. These educational programmes are not only restricted to formal educational matters, but also cover general knowledge and a wide sphere of interests such as career guidance, health-related issues, economic issues and many others.

The AMPS figures for 1992 show a very low percentage of the audience viewing during the times relegated to educational programmes (See Appendix B1). The figures range from 38 (0.2%) to 568 (2.5%). These results support the scheduling manager of CCV, Johnny Henderson's admission that they were broadcasting to the walls and ceilings (*Sunday Tribune, 6 Sept. 1992: 2*). As part of their

revamping strategy, CCV will begin broadcasting the educational programmes later in the day from 14h30, and as a long-term goal, the spare channel TSS, will be used to transmit the majority of the educational material. The choice and the scheduling of programmes have been strategised as to broadcast the audience-maximising programmes at peak times ranging from 17:00 to 22:00 in order to attract advertising revenue and to be able to continue showing the non-commercially viable such the educational programmes. Mphahlele maintains that this is a business reality that may not necessarily be in accordance with everybody's values.

## **8. TENSION BETWEEN THE PUBLIC SERVICE ETHOS AND COMMERCIALISATION**

It is a fallacy to assume that the Free Market principles propagated by CCV are any less ideological than the overt and covert influence the apartheid government has on the SABC. The media owned by capitalists does not need censorship or control by the government as they can do it for themselves. They are drawn from the same ruling class, there is merely variation in methods of control and emphasis, but their interests are divergent. The controlling 'voices' of the SABC, including CCV, tend to come from the same class as the higher echelons of industry, high culture and politics, and the government is in alliance to these.

CCV is part of the propaganda for a particular form of social change to a Free market system. The same hegemonic control that was characteristic of the apartheid era will be mutated by the co-option of a few black middle class population also sharing the aspirations of the capitalist class. The content of CCV is moulded by consumerist ideology influenced by the dominant set of social relations in society. The question of ownership and control are just as important as the question of the value system and set of social relations within which commercial media operate and which they serve to reinforce.

The scheduling of the programmes on CCV illustrates the tension between the interests of advertisers and the public. CCV is attempting to be everything at once; it is a " Nation's Station ", a commercial channel and it is attempting to be sensitive to the social problems within the country. As a result the channel seems to be failing. CCV, from its inception, has been received with mixed reactions, both positive and negative, from various organisations and viewers. The major dilemma being experienced by the planners of CCV, is the fact that the channel's audience is equally divided into black and white viewers. The white audience does not mind the imported programmes that are broadcast during the peak time (18h00 - 22h00), but the black audience prefers to be addressed in their vernacular languages.

These disparities in tastes have been catered for in the revamping of the channel that began on the first of October 1992. CCV has decided to increase the amount of local content during the peak hours as to satisfy its black audience. This local content has been restricted to the news and indepth programmes, magazine programmes, game shows and dramas, interchangeably on weekdays. The imported material has been delegated to the late evenings and weekends. Therefore the previous assumption of CCV that because metropolitan blacks are conservant in English, there will automatically accept imported English programmes, has proved to be a grave misjudgement. This is an indication of the need for an increase in audience studies which, unfortunately, are virtually absent in South Africa.

The educational programmes are concentrated into the morning and early afternoon slots. During the period from 11 in the morning and to about three in the afternoon, the children whom these programmes are broadcast to, are supposedly at school. Scheduling manager for CCV, Johnny Henderson, has realized that a lot of restructuring has to be done on the channel. The weekdays children and educational programmes will be

scrapped: " We were broadcasting to the walls and ceilings " (*Sunday Tribune*, 6 Sept. 1992: 2). CCV will be revamping the channel from the first of October 1992 and will be taking into account their Viewers interests and needs above the market forces. "The new line-up gets back to the basics of TV appeal: Give 'em, what they want, when they want it - and dump everything else" (*Sunday Tribune*, 6 Sept. 1992: 2).

Since it is cheaper to buy programmes than to produce them, passive receipt of foreign media products can result in cultural imperialism which is already evident in many countries around the globe such as Canada and Latin America. This issue has not formed part of the vigorous debate around media in South Africa as most of the critical attention has been largely confined to the political content of the SABC. The amendment of CCV indicates the channel's sensitivity to its audiences' want, but also the fact the South African public still values its 'culture' and wants to see an increase of local content in the programming than passively accepting overseas entertainment.

## **9. CULTURAL IMPERIALISM**

Cultural imperialism is a theory that has been forwarded by writers such as Lerner, 5; Schramm, 1964; Schiller, 1969; Wells, 1972 and Mattelart, 1979 amongst others. It Postulates that the media can help in 'modernisation' by introducing 'western' values at the cost of a breakdown of traditional values and the loss of 'authentic' local cultures. They argue that the values so introduced are those of capitalism and that the process is imperialistic in deliberately subordinating smaller and developing countries to the interests of the dominant capitalists powers, especially the United States of America.

There is a clear proposition which belongs to these theories that the media exert influences which is formulated to be negative on the receiving cultures, by the way if actual media products, themes, genres and professional values and practices (Tunstall, 1977; Boyd-Barrett, 1977, 1982; Golding, 1977). The cultural imperialism thesis claims that authentic, traditional and local cultures in many parts of the world are being battered out of existence by the indiscriminate acceptance of large quantities of slick commercial and media products, mainly from the United States. This argument is in favour of restrictions upon media imports including the deliberate preservation of the local and traditional cultures.

The effect of imported commercial culture is that creates favourable conditions to the adoption of social forms and personal behaviour consistent with capitalism and to the political institutions and perceptions which predominate in the capitalist world. The dominant and subordinate classes are constantly involved in the dynamics of struggle for power (Gramsci: 1971). The media as a form of property is an instrument of the dominant capitalist class. The work of the media belongs essentially to the sphere of the superstructure (of ideas, ideology, consciousness) and is interrelated to the economic forces and structures (capitalism, socialism and so on) (Gramsci: 1971). The media does play a crucial role in the assistance of gaining and maintaining of power by the bourgeoisie. The media can also act to hold back change, for example, to prevent a revolution from capitalism to socialism, except for change within the framework of capitalist growth.

The controlling voices within CCV are in the same class as the ruling hegemony and desire to maintain their dominance and the capitalist system with minor changes. The racial capitalism which was the hallmark of apartheid South Africa is mutating in order to remain alive by incorporating the views and desires the subordinate groups, namely the urbanised, black middle class and attempting to win legitimacy and consent without compromising too much of the existing fundamental structures of capitalism. The ruling class is expanding its interests beyond the corporatist stage by taking into account the interests of the black middle class thus enlarging its circle of allies and simultaneously entrenching its hegemony (Gramsci: 1971). The distinctive classes of the capitalists and

workers which through their mutual and imbalanced relationship that drives the capitalists system will remain intact, the difference will be the introduction of a small percentage of blacks into the capitalist class.

It has been suggested that the "Most effective means of subjugating a people is to capture their minds. The moulding of men's minds is the best means of conquest" (Renato Constantino, 1970 in Mattelart and Siegelau: 1979). The West has sought to discourage the Third World countries from the desire to 'go socialist' into the market-oriented capitalist world economies by offering to use an analogy, sugar-coated exogenous cultures in seemingly harmless media products (Lee: 1980). The omnipresence of the United States made television programmes throughout the world is but one of the manifestations of cultural imperialism. The interests of the elites in South Africa correspond to those of international capitalism and thus form an alliance to create and perpetuate cultural imperialism, consciously or unconsciously.

The variety of languages within South Africa is a major factor in cultural imperialism and also the lack of national identity which was aggravated by the apartheid policy. English is often the popularly suggested lingua franca of South Africa as it is powerful internationally and its usage been seen as been suitable for media use and has shaped it. This switch towards English by most countries is illustrated by the much higher proportion of young adults who speak English as opposed to older adults (Lee: 1980). In South Africa, however its usage is not spreading to the population at large. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) statistics suggest that 22 million South Africans will not be able to communicate in English by the year 2000 (Silke: 1989).

The CCV viewers are mainly urban, employed in the modern economy, are relatively youthful and have higher or average incomes. They may respond to and their attitudes reiterated by the themes in the imported media. For example, *It's a living* and *Gabriel's Fire* (See Appendix E3), portray Blacks in roles of complete equality setting moral examples for the whole society of integration within a society that does not have any racially based legislation aimed at separating groups of people. These American programmes show blacks and white working efficiently together. The socio-political environment of these shows are contradictory to the reality of lifestyles within South Africa and highlight in some way the success of racially integrated societies. The constant emphasis in the multitude of American broadcasts shown on CCV is on racial harmony which can hardly have a negative impact on the race relations in South Africa.

On the contrary, however, the majority of the American programmes 'legitimizes the capitalistic ethic and the stability of the class structure' (Tomaselli, 1989:138). *The Bold and the Beautiful* offers us the ensemble of relations within the capitalist relations, the glamour and seductive quality of the soap merely underplays these antagonistic relations and prevents a critical assessment of our conditions in society as viewers. The programming of CCV is not geared at rocking the boat of the existing class order which is inherent in the capitalist system. The rise of the black middle class and the forced reforms to the economic, political and social spheres has necessitated the mutation of racial capitalism that was established by apartheid to a system in which race is not particularly the criterion of class.

American products predominantly reflect American middle class aspirations and fantasies (Lee, 1980). CCV-TV as a transmitter of popular media Culture delivers immediate consummatory pleasure with very little effort required for enjoyment on the part of the public (Lee: 1980). It does not only reflect the values, aspirations and fantasies of the middle class, but also offers vicarious participation and escapism for the pent-up working class of the modern society.

The United States is a large and powerful country equipped with an elaborate and efficient media infrastructure that puts them at an advantageous position in programming, production and distribution. They have a large amount of talent, money, equipment and experience which leads to their undisputed lead and initiative in their global media prominence (Tunstall: 1977). The dominance of American cultural products is ironically the result of the Equity ban which has limited South Africans' access to United Kingdom programming thus South African television schedules are stuffed with Australian, Canadian, French, German and United States programmes (*Broadcast*, Nov. 8, 1991).

The United States can afford to sell their products at a price much less expensive than that which the local production might have otherwise cost. Foreign sales are a bonus for them. The volume of television programming that is consumed and the high cost of production has led to global programming trends and media patterns (Lee: 1980). Local content reflects amongst other things a country's culture, history, social structures and its people and should play a significant role in the programme mix for any broadcaster. Favourable conditions should be created for the stimulation and presentation of local talent and local programming

## **10. CONCLUSION**

There are problems inherent in the libertarian model of media (Louw: 1984). The libertarian theory is central to the operations of CCV. As a commercially-oriented station, CCV is characterised by market-censorship which means that it is 'controlled' by the advertisers, and the middle class interests, who the advertisers are interested in (Louw: 1990). Advertisers are interested in those with disposable income and that means the middle class. Therefore, when the libertarian model is applied in the South African context, the media will cater for the affluent white middle class and a very few blacks, to make much of a difference, thus excluding a large proportion of the South African population which is working class (See Appendix D).

The large percentage of black South Africa is poor and not attractive to the advertisers. Therefore their interests such as the increase in vernacular programmes will be minimally satisfied, or ignored, because if the peak time from 18h00-22h00 is dominated by vernacular programmes the white audience will not tune onto CCV. This will mean the loss of the advertising revenue on which the channel depends on to operate. Thus the libertarian model can only guarantee that the interests of the middle class will be served, eliminating a large proportion of the viewership.

New possibilities have to be investigated that will aid in the redistribution of resources in order to redress the skewing produced by racial capitalism. This step is important for democracy and as a guarantee of diversity of opinion in the post-apartheid era. The combination of a socialist and libertarian model proposed by Eric Louw in *Review*, November 1990: 34-37, can offer, amongst others, basis for finding alternative models that will epitomize a democratic media system.

There is a need to provide a degree of protection for various aspects of the South African cultural heritage. Television images are powerful and without a desirable amount of domestic content on our screens we will be vulnerable to imported cultural norms. South Africa has to satisfy multi-cultural needs and at the same time build bridges between all its communities. Sensitivity to the diversity of local cultures is important and not allowing 'Westernization' of African cultures and 'Americanisation' of South African culture.

Acquisition of foreign media products results in the outflow of R500 million per annum from South Africa (*Task Group Report*: 1991). Foreign sales of South Africa film and television products could provide an opportunity to earn significant foreign revenue." It is

now time to rise up and take our place amongst the international giants of the world. It can be done " (Dr, Khalid Al-Mansour: 1990). Well-made local programming should attract, often outperforming imported programmes as seen occurring in India. Outstanding features of India's broadcasting is its nationalist and socialist sentiments and overtones in sheer determination to achieve media self-reliance manifested in the absence of Hollywood television products (Lee: 1980).

The indigenous culture needs protection not just because it is decaying, but because it is devoid of a strong metropolitan economic support. South Africa must formulate clear policies to control their own media destiny by not adopting repressive and authoritarian media control, but by not accepting, unrestrained, foreign cultural domination. There needs to be a choice of any appropriate synthesis of media models and alternatives as long as it is fair and beneficial to its national development goals.

Perhaps the Free Market model is not appropriate for the South African context at this juncture in its history. There are still gross imbalances that still need to be addressed and past wrongs that need to be corrected. These include the allocation to peripheral positions of the vernacular languages and the enforced hierarchical placement of the various cultures in the African 'ladder' with the African cultures constantly relegated to the lowest positions. Respect of other local cultures and its languages needs to be restored with the emphasis on equal status to 'western' culture. The fact that South Africa is composed of diverse cultures and languages should not be used as a scapegoat to address ways to overcome cultural imperialism by the already advantaged cultural sector within the country such as the English over the other cultural groups.

The intentions of CCV to act as a catalyst in the unifications of South African people (See Appendix E1) through depoliticising the channel and using the English language to break down the barriers between cultures should not, however, pass unacknowledged. The concept of narrowcasting as opposed to broadcasting should be examined so as to empower communities and as a process to effectively address the questions of access to communication institutions and decentralisation of power. National broadcasting station can continue exist, but attention should be given to small-scale casting over which the various communities and groupings in South Africa can exercise control and address the issues that are important to them.

Narrowcasting can merge with the community development projects in the country with the primary aim of empowering the people. The mentality of dependency and begging should be eliminated amongst the impoverished. Such project will give the people a degree of control over their lives in the alienating conditions of capitalist society. Narrowcasting will in the long-term aid balance power relations between the government and the ordinary citizens in the sense that the people would be equipped to control their own destiny to a limited extent than leaving everything to the government.

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